



PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of

Tatsuya IMURA et al.

Group Art Unit: 1754

Application No.: 09/890,768

Examiner: S. Bos

Filed: August 3, 2001

Docket No.: 110274

For: PROCESSES FOR PRODUCING ANATASE TITANIUM OXIDE AND TITANIUM OXIDE COATING MATERIAL

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RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

In reply to the March 20, 2003 Restriction (lack of unity of invention) Requirement, Applicants provisionally elect Group I, claims 1, 3-8, 10-14, with traverse.

At least the claims of Group I (claims 1, 3-8 and 10-14) and Group II (claims 2 and 9) should be examined together because the claims of Group I share a special technical feature with the claims of Group II. Specifically, all of the claims of Groups I and II share the special technical feature of:

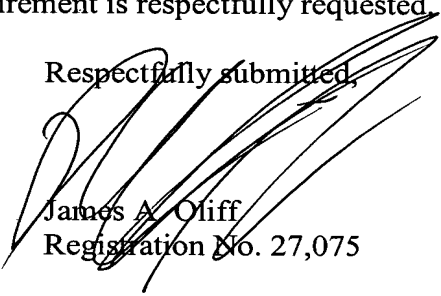
a process for producing anatase titanium oxide, having high catalytic activity, comprising heat treating a titania sol solution, a titania gel, or a titania sol-gel mixture containing as a solvent an alcohol having a structure represented by the formula $C_nH_{2n+1}OH$, and then treating the heat-treated product.

This special technical feature distinguishes over the prior art at least because it produces an anatase titanium oxide powder having high photocatalytic activity and large specific surface area by: (1) using a heat treatment, (2) using few steps, and (3) being a simple process.

It is also respectfully submitted that the subject matter of all of the claims is sufficiently related that a thorough search for the subject matter of any one Group of claims would encompass a search for the subject matter of the remaining claims. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the search and examination of the entire application could be made without serious burden. See MPEP §803 in which it is stated that "if the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions" (emphasis added). It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply in the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to Applicants and duplicative examination by the Patent Office.

Thus, withdrawal of the Restriction Requirement is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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Date: April 21, 2003

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